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Commissioner for Patents
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FROM: Noreen Pierani

Fax No. 513-627-8118

Phone No. 513-627-4213

Application No. : 09/862,869
Inventor(s) : Nobuhiko HONMA, *et al.*
Filed : 05/22/2001
Docket No. : AA472
Confirmation No. : 1083

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Noreen Pierani (Signature)

Listed below are the item(s) being submitted with this Certificate of Mailing**:

- 1) Appeal Brief (w/ Appendix I & II)
- 2)
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- 5)

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Revised 11/18/2005*



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Application No. : 09/862,869
Inventor(s) : Nobuhiko HONMA, *et al.*
Filed : 05/22/2001
Art Unit : 1751
Examiner : Margaret V. EINSMANN
Docket No. : AA472
Confirmation No. : 1083
Customer No. : 27752
Title : METHOD FOR CARING FOR A FABRIC ARTICLE AND
FOR PROVIDING A SYSTEM THEREFOR

APPEAL BRIEF

Mail Stop Appeal Brief - Patents
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

Appellants appealed to the Board of Appeals by filing a Notice of Appeal, dated February 24, 2005 from the final rejection of Claims 1-39, as contained in the final Office Action dated September 24, 2004 of the Primary Examiner. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any necessary fees to Deposit Account No. 16-2480.

(1) **REAL PARTY IN INTEREST**

The real party in interest is The Procter & Gamble Company, a corporation of The State of Ohio, having a place of business at Cincinnati, Ohio 45202.

(2) **RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES**

There are no known related appeals or interferences.

(3) **STATUS OF CLAIMS**

Claims 1-39 are rejected and have been appealed. A copy of the appealed Claims 1-39 is attached as APPENDIX I.

(4) **STATUS OF AMENDMENTS**

All amendments have been entered.

(5) **SUMMARY OF THE CLAIMED SUBJECT MATTER**

The present inventions relates to a method for caring for a fabric article comprising the steps of: providing a laundry detergent composition comprising a set of laundering instructions (*See e.g.*, Specification, page 6, lines 32-35); providing a fabric treatment composition comprising a set of fabric treatment instructions (*See e.g.*, Specification, page 16, lines 14-28), the fabric treatment composition being selected from the group consisting of a bleaching composition, a color maintenance composition, a dryer sheet composition, a finishing composition, a pre-treating composition, and a combination thereof (*See e.g.*, Specification, page 17, lines 26 – page 18, line 2); laundering a fabric article with the laundry detergent composition; and treating the fabric article with the fabric treatment composition, wherein the set of laundering instructions comprise a laundering recommendation to use the laundry detergent composition in combination with the fabric treatment composition, wherein the set of fabric treatment instructions comprise a fabric treatment recommendation to use the fabric treatment composition in combination with the laundry detergent composition; and wherein the fabric treatment composition and the laundry detergent composition possess one or more coordinated elements selected from a brand name, container graphics, containers, the dosages per container, a dye, a perfume, a trade dress, and combinations thereof (*See, e.g.*, Specification, page 18, line 25 – page 19, line 2).

(6) GROUNDS OF REJECTION TO BE REVIEWED ON APPEAL

- A. Whether claims 1-4, 6-10, 12-16, 18-22, 24-32, and 34-39 are allegedly anticipated under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over How to Clean Practically Anything by Florman et al. (“Florman”).
- B. Whether claims 1-4, 6-10, 12-16, 18-22, 24-32, and 34-39 are allegedly unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over How to Clean Practically Anything by Florman et al. (“Florman”).
- C. Whether claims 5, 11, 17, 23, and 33 are allegedly unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Florman in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,775,935 to Yourick (“Yourick”) and U.S. Patent No. 5,710,884 to Dedrick (“Dedrick”).

A copy of the references is attached as APPENDIX II.

(7) **ARGUMENT**

A: Claims 1-4, 6-10, 12-16, 18-22, 24-32, and 34-39 are not anticipated under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over How to Clean Practically Anything by Florman et al. ("Florman").

Applicants respectfully submit that Florman does not disclose each and every element of the claim.

Applicants respectfully submit that Florman does not disclose a method for caring for a fabric article comprising the steps of: providing a laundry detergent composition comprising a set of laundering instructions; providing a fabric treatment composition comprising a set of fabric treatment instructions, the fabric treatment composition being selected from the group consisting of a bleaching composition, a color maintenance composition, a dryer sheet composition, a finishing composition, a pre-treating composition, and a combination thereof; laundering a fabric article with the laundry detergent composition; and treating the fabric article with the fabric treatment composition, wherein the set of laundering instructions comprise a laundering recommendation to use the laundry detergent composition in combination with the fabric treatment composition, wherein the set of fabric treatment instructions comprise a fabric treatment recommendation to use the fabric treatment composition in combination with the laundry detergent composition; and wherein the fabric treatment composition and the laundry detergent composition possess one or more coordinated elements selected from a brand name, container graphics, containers, the dosages per container, a dye, a perfume, a trade dress, and combinations thereof. (Emphasis added).

On pages 3-5 of the July 7, 2003 Office Action, it alleges various recitations from Florman. However, there is absolutely no disclosure whereby the fabric treatment composition and the laundry detergent composition possess one or more coordinated elements selected from a brand name, container graphics, containers, the dosages per container, a dye, a perfume, a trade dress, and combinations thereof. While the packages of Florman allegedly suggest instructions for use, recommendations for use, and suggestions for using more than one product, there is no disclosure in Florman whereby the fabric treatment composition and the laundry detergent composition possess one or more coordinated elements selected from a brand name, container graphics, containers, the dosages per container, a dye, a perfume, a trade dress, and combinations thereof.

Moreover, regarding elements, such as brand name, Florman suggests “forgetting brand loyalty” where the present invention seeks to utilize coordinated elements that include, among other elements, brand name, trade dress, and container graphics. *See, e.g.*, Florman, page 97, Prices.

While the Office Action discusses at length the use of detergents, boosters, and other fabric care compositions, there is no discussion related to the inclusion of, among other elements, coordinated elements selected from a brand name, container graphics, containers, the dosages per container, a dye, a perfume, a trade dress, and combinations thereof, in conjunction with these fabric care compositions. Moreover, there is no discussion related to any coordinated elements within the Office Action. Finally, Florman not only fails to disclose such coordinated elements, it actually suggests that elements such as brand name, container graphics, and trade dress be forgotten. As such, Applicants respectfully submit that Florman does not disclose or even suggest the present invention.

- B. Claims 1-4, 6-10, 12-16, 18-22, 24-32, and 34-39 are not anticipated under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over How to Clean Practically Anything by Florman et al. (“Florman”).

Applicants respectfully submit that Florman does not disclose or suggest each and every element of the claim.

Applicants respectfully submit that Florman does not disclose or even suggest a method for caring for a fabric article comprising the steps of: providing a laundry detergent composition comprising a set of laundering instructions; providing a fabric treatment composition comprising a set of fabric treatment instructions, the fabric treatment composition being selected from the group consisting of a bleaching composition, a color maintenance composition, a dryer sheet composition, a finishing composition, a pre-treating composition, and a combination thereof; laundering a fabric article with the laundry detergent composition; and treating the fabric article with the fabric treatment composition, wherein the set of laundering instructions comprise a laundering recommendation to use the laundry detergent composition in combination with the fabric treatment composition, wherein the set of fabric treatment instructions comprise a fabric treatment recommendation to use the fabric treatment composition in combination with the laundry detergent composition; and wherein the fabric treatment composition and the laundry detergent composition possess one or more coordinated elements selected from a

brand name, container graphics, containers, the dosages per container, a dye, a perfume, a trade dress, and combinations thereof. (Emphasis added).

On page 5 of the July 7, 2003 Office Action, it alleges that the claims are obvious variants of the teachings in Florman. The Office Action further alleges that it is not inventive to sell products known to be used in sequence, with instructions to use them in sequence. Applicants respectfully submit that while Florman may disclose instructions for the use of products, there is absolutely no disclosure or suggestion of products having the elements claimed in the invention or methods of caring for a fabric article utilizing the coordinating elements as disclosed by the present invention. Indeed, the present invention discusses the need for coordinated elements to facilitate customer recognition, reduce consumer confusion, and increase ease of use. *See, e.g.*, Specification, page 18, line 25 – page 19, line 2. Florman does not recognize these needs, nor does it provide a solution for these needs. Further, Florman, as discussed above, is completely silent regarding the use of these coordinated elements to facilitate customer recognition, reduce consumer confusion, and increase ease of use. Florman actually teaches away from these elements as Florman suggests that elements such as brand name, container graphics, and trade dress be forgotten. *See, e.g.*, Florman, page 97, Prices. Because Florman does not disclose or suggest each and every limitation of the claims, Applicants respectfully submit that Florman does not disclose or suggest the present invention.

- C: Claims 5, 11, 17, 23, and 33 are patentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Florman in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,775,935 to Yourick (“Yourick”) and U.S. Patent No. 5,710,884 to Dedrick (“Dedrick”).

On pages 5 and 6 of the Office Action, it alleges that it would have been obvious to the skilled artisan to use the method of Katz or Dedrick to collect information to create a personal profile by monitoring a consumer’s habits and needs as disclosed by Katz or Dedrick and from the information provided, provided personalized instructions on cleaning any stain or garment type from data stored in a computer. Applicants, however, respectfully submit that the disclosures of Katz and/or Dedrick do not cure the defects of Florman. Specifically, Katz or Dedrick do not disclose fabric treatment composition and the laundry detergent composition possess one or more coordinated elements selected from a brand name, container graphics, containers, the dosages per container, a dye, a perfume, a trade dress, and combinations thereof

On pages 6-8 of the July 7, 2003 Office Action, the Office Action responds to Applicants previous arguments. Applicant respectfully submits the following rebuttal.

On page 6 of the Office Action, it alleges that a “characteristic ingredient”, as disclosed in claim 1, suggests that boosters and detergents generally contain the same characteristics. Applicants respectfully submit that one of ordinary skill in the art would recognize that there are a plethora of ingredients that a manufacturer of fabric treatment compositions and the laundry detergent compositions may choose. These ingredients are in many cases very different. However, in order to expedite prosecution, “characteristic ingredient” was deleted from claim 1 in Applicant’s response dated August 3, 2004.

Regarding “PRICES”, as cited by the Office Action, Florman suggests forgetting brand loyalty and buying whatever satisfactory product is on sale (Emphasis added). Applicants respectfully submit that such an idea teaches away from the present invention, which discloses, among other elements, wherein the fabric treatment composition and the laundry detergent composition possess one or more coordinated elements selected from a brand name, container graphics, containers, the dosages per container, a dye, a perfume, a trade dress, and combinations thereof.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the inference made by the Examiner regarding brand names. Regarding brand names as such, most laundry products have brand names that are not utilized with other products. As a non-limiting example, many consumers use Tide®, a laundry detergent, with Downy®, a fabric softener. These products, while made by the same manufacturer (The Procter & Gamble Company), the do not have the same brand name, trade dress, container graphics, etc.... The claims made in the Office Action regarding brand names are tantamount to the Examiner taking Official Notice of such claims. As such “it would not be appropriate for the examiner to take official notice of facts without citing a prior art reference where the facts asserted to be well known are not capable of instant and unquestionable demonstration as being well-known. For example, assertions of technical facts in the areas of esoteric technology or specific knowledge of the prior art must always be supported by citation to some reference work recognized as standard in the pertinent art”. *See, In re Ahelrt*, 424 F.2d at 1091, MPEP 2144.03 A.

Regarding perfume-free products disclosed by the Office Action, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is drawn to compositions wherein the fabric treatment composition and the laundry detergent composition possess one or more coordinated elements selected from a brand name, container graphics, containers, the dosages per container, a dye, a perfume, a trade dress, and combinations thereof. Applicants respectfully submit that the lack of perfume, as suggested by the Office Action, is not an element of the claim, rather it is the presence of perfume within the fabric treatment

composition and the laundry detergent composition as a coordinated element that is included in the claim.

Regarding mothers of newborns using products which contain graphics that mothers of newborns will only use products which contain graphics indicating that the products are formulated especially for babies, Applicants respectfully submit that there is no disclosure or suggestion of such a limitation in any of the cited references. Further, Applicants respectfully submit that mothers of newborns do not necessarily use products that are formulated especially for babies, as presumably many consumers wash baby clothing along with adult clothing. The claim made by the Office Action reciting that mothers of newborns will only using products which contain graphics indicating that the products are formulated especially for babies is tantamount to the Examiner taking Official Notice of such a statement. As such "it would not be appropriate for the examiner to take official notice of facts without citing a prior art reference where the facts asserted to be well known are not capable of instant and unquestionable demonstration as being well-known. For example, assertions of technical facts in the areas of esoteric technology or specific knowledge of the prior art must always be supported by citation to some reference work recognized as standard in the pertinent art". *See, In re Ahelrt*, 424 F.2d at 1091, MPEP 2144.03 A.

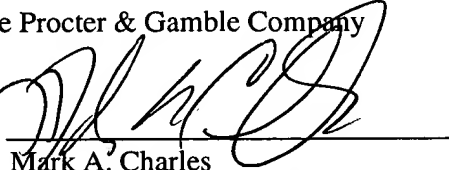
(8) **CONCLUSION**

In view of the foregoing remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all claims are allowable. Accordingly, Appellants respectfully request reversal of all rejections.

Respectfully submitted,

The Procter & Gamble Company

By

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark A. Charles', written over a horizontal line.

Mark A. Charles

Attorney for Appellant(s)

Registration No. 51,547

(513) 627-4229

Dated: May 8, 2006
Customer No. 27752



APPENDIX I

Appealed Claims – Case AA472

1. (Rejected) A method for caring for a fabric article comprising the steps of:
providing a laundry detergent composition comprising a set of laundering instructions;
providing a fabric treatment composition comprising a set of fabric treatment instructions, the fabric treatment composition being selected from the group consisting of a bleaching composition, a color maintenance composition, a dryer sheet composition, a finishing composition, a pre-treating composition, and a combination thereof;
laundering a fabric article with the laundry detergent composition; and
treating the fabric article with the fabric treatment composition,
wherein the set of laundering instructions comprise a laundering recommendation to use the laundry detergent composition in combination with the fabric treatment composition, wherein the set of fabric treatment instructions comprise a fabric treatment recommendation to use the fabric treatment composition in combination with the laundry detergent composition; and wherein the fabric treatment composition and the laundry detergent composition possess one or more coordinated elements selected from a brand name, container graphics, containers, the dosages per container, a dye, a perfume, a trade dress, and combinations thereof.
2. (Rejected) The method of Claim 1, wherein the set of laundering instructions comprises a set of personalized instructions.
3. (Rejected) The method of Claim 1, wherein the fabric treatment instructions are provided on a location selected from the group consisting of a pamphlet, a computer screen, a printed ticket, a kiosk, a sign, a product container, an advertisement, a product display, an Internet website, a video, and a combination thereof.

4. (Rejected) A method of Claim 1, wherein the fabric treatment instructions comprise a set of personalized instructions.

5. (Rejected) A method of Claim 1, further comprising the steps of collecting from a consumer one or more pieces of personal data, determining a consumer profile, and providing to the consumer a set of personalized instructions.

6. (Rejected) A method for providing a fabric care system comprising the steps of:
providing a laundry detergent composition;
providing a fabric treatment composition selected from the group consisting of a bleaching composition, a color maintenance composition, a dryer sheet composition, a finishing composition, a pre-treating composition, and a combination thereof; and
providing a set of fabric treatment instructions comprising a fabric treatment recommendation to use the fabric treatment composition in combination with the laundry detergent composition,
wherein the fabric treatment composition and the laundry detergent composition possess one or more coordinated elements selected from a brand name, container graphics, containers, the dosages per container, a dye, a perfume, a trade dress, and combinations thereof.

7. (Rejected) A method of Claim 6, wherein the fabric treatment recommendation comprises a post-laundering recommendation to use the fabric treatment composition after the laundry detergent composition.

8. (Rejected) A method of Claim 6, wherein the fabric treatment recommendation comprises a pre-laundering recommendation to use the fabric treatment composition before the laundry detergent composition.

9. (Rejected) A method of Claim 6, wherein the fabric treatment instructions are provided on a location selected from the group consisting of a pamphlet, a computer screen, a printed ticket, a kiosk, a sign, a product container, an advertisement, a product display, an Internet website, a video, and a combination thereof.

10. (Rejected) A method of Claim 6, wherein the fabric treatment instructions comprise a set of personalized instructions.

11. (Rejected) A method of Claim 6, further comprising the steps of collecting from a consumer one or more pieces of personal data, determining a consumer profile, and providing to the consumer a set of personalized instructions.

12. (Rejected) A method of Claim 6, wherein the fabric treatment composition is a first fabric treatment composition, and further comprising a second fabric treatment composition which is different from the first fabric treatment composition.

13. (Rejected) A method for caring for a fabric article comprising the steps of:
providing a fabric conditioning composition comprising a set of conditioning instructions;
providing a fabric treatment composition comprising a set of fabric treatment instructions, the fabric treatment composition being selected from the group consisting of a bleaching composition, a color maintenance composition, a dryer sheet composition, a finishing composition, a pre-treating composition, and a combination thereof;
conditioning a fabric article with the fabric conditioning composition, and
treating the fabric article with the fabric treatment composition,
wherein the set of conditioning instructions comprise a recommendation to use the fabric conditioning composition in combination with the fabric treatment composition, wherein the set of fabric treatment instructions comprise a fabric treatment recommendation to use the fabric treatment composition in combination with the fabric conditioning composition; and wherein the fabric conditioning composition and the fabric treatment composition possess one or more coordinated elements selected from a brand name, a characteristic ingredient, container graphics, containers, the dosages per container, a dye, a perfume, a trade dress, and combinations thereof.

14. (Rejected) The method of Claim 13, wherein the set of conditioning instructions comprises a set of personalized instructions.

15. (Rejected) The method of Claim 13, wherein the fabric treatment instructions are provided on a location selected from the group consisting of a pamphlet, a computer screen, a printed ticket, a kiosk, a sign, a product container, an advertisement, a product display, an Internet website, a video, and a combination thereof.

16. (Rejected) The method of Claim 13, wherein the fabric treatment instructions comprise a set of personalized instructions.

17. (Rejected) A method of Claim 13, further comprising the steps of collecting from a consumer one or more pieces of personal data, determining a consumer profile, and providing to the consumer a set of personalized instructions.

18. (Rejected) A method for providing a fabric care system comprising the steps of:
providing a fabric conditioning composition;
providing a fabric treatment composition selected from the group consisting of a bleaching composition, a color maintenance composition, a dryer sheet composition, a finishing composition, a pre-treating composition, and a combination thereof; and
providing a set of fabric treatment instructions comprising a fabric treatment recommendation to use the fabric treatment composition in combination with the fabric conditioning composition,
wherein the fabric treatment composition and the fabric conditioning composition possess one or more coordinated elements selected from a brand name, container graphics, containers, the dosages per container, a dye, a perfume, a trade dress, and combinations thereof.

19. (Rejected) The method of Claim 18, wherein the fabric treatment recommendation comprises a pre-conditioning recommendation to use the fabric treatment composition before the fabric conditioning composition.

20. (Rejected) The method of Claim 18, wherein the fabric treatment recommendation comprises a post-conditioning recommendation to use the fabric treatment composition after the fabric conditioning composition.

21. (Rejected) The method of Claim 18, wherein the fabric treatment instructions are provided on a location selected from the group consisting of a pamphlet, a computer screen, a printed ticket, a kiosk, a sign, a product container, an advertisement, a product display, an Internet website, a video, and a combination thereof.

22. (Rejected) A method of Claim 18, wherein the fabric treatment instructions comprise a set of personalized instructions.

23. (Rejected) A method of Claim 18, further comprising the steps of collecting from a consumer one or more pieces of personal data, determining a consumer profile, and providing to the consumer a set of personalized instructions.

24. (Rejected) The method of Claim 18, wherein the fabric treatment composition is a first fabric treatment composition, and further comprising a second fabric treatment composition which is different from the first fabric treatment composition.

25. (Rejected) A method for providing a fabric care system comprising the steps of:
 providing a laundry detergent composition;
 providing a fabric conditioning composition;
 providing a fabric treatment composition selected from the group consisting of
 a bleaching composition, a color maintenance composition, a dryer sheet
 composition, a finishing composition, a pre-treating composition, and a
 combination thereof; and
 providing a set of fabric treatment instructions comprising a fabric treatment
 recommendation to use the fabric treatment composition in combination
 with a composition selected from the group consisting of the laundry
 detergent composition, the fabric conditioning composition, and a
 combination thereof,
 wherein the laundry detergent composition, the fabric conditioning composition
 and the fabric treatment composition possess one or more coordinated
 elements selected from a brand name, a characteristic ingredient, container

graphics, containers, the dosages per container, a dye, a perfume, a trade dress, and combinations thereof.

26. (Rejected) The method of Claim 25, further comprising the steps of:
laundrying a fabric article with the laundry detergent composition;
conditioning the fabric article with the fabric conditioning composition; and
treating the fabric article with the fabric treatment composition,
wherein the laundrying step occurs before the conditioning step.
27. (Rejected) The method of Claim 25, wherein the fabric treatment recommendation comprises a post-laundrying recommendation to use the fabric treatment composition after the laundry detergent composition.
28. (Rejected) The method of Claim 25, wherein the fabric treatment recommendation comprises a pre-laundrying recommendation to use the fabric treatment composition before the laundry detergent composition.
29. (Rejected) The method of Claim 25, wherein the fabric treatment recommendation comprises a pre-conditioning recommendation to use the fabric treatment composition before the fabric conditioning composition.
30. (Rejected) The method of Claim 25, wherein the fabric treatment recommendation comprises a post-conditioning recommendation to use the fabric treatment composition after the fabric conditioning composition.
31. (Rejected) The method of Claim 25, wherein the fabric treatment instructions are provided on a location selected from the group consisting of a pamphlet, a computer screen, a printed ticket, a kiosk, a sign, a product container, an advertisement, a product display, an Internet website, a video, and a combination thereof.
32. (Rejected) The method of Claim 25, wherein the fabric treatment instructions comprise a set of personalized instructions.

33. (Rejected) A method of Claim 25, further comprising the steps of collecting from a consumer one or more pieces of personal data, determining a consumer profile, and providing to the consumer a set of personalized instructions.
34. (Rejected) A method for providing a fabric care system comprising the steps of:
providing a first fabric treatment composition selected from the group consisting of a bleaching composition, a color maintenance composition, a dryer sheet composition, a finishing composition, a pre-treating composition, and a combination thereof;
providing a second fabric treatment composition selected from the group consisting of a bleaching composition, a color maintenance composition, a dryer sheet composition, a finishing composition, a pre-treating composition, and a combination thereof; and
providing a set of fabric treatment instructions,
wherein the first fabric treatment composition is different from the second fabric treatment composition, wherein the fabric treatment instructions comprise a fabric treatment recommendation to use the first fabric treatment composition in combination with the second fabric treatment composition
wherein the first fabric treatment composition and the second fabric treatment composition possess one or more coordinated elements selected from a brand name, a characteristic ingredient, container graphics, containers, the dosages per container, a dye, a perfume, a trade dress, and combinations thereof.
35. (Rejected) The method of Claim 34, further comprising the steps of:
applying the first fabric treatment composition to a fabric article; and
applying the second fabric treatment composition to the fabric article.
36. (Rejected) The method of Claim 34, further comprising a set of second fabric treatment instructions.
37. (Rejected) The method of Claim 34, wherein the fabric treatment instructions are provided on a location selected from the group consisting of a pamphlet, a computer

screen, a printed ticket, a kiosk, a sign, a product container, an advertisement, a product display, an Internet website, a video, and a combination thereof.

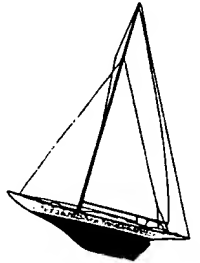
38. (Rejected) A method of Claim 34, wherein the fabric treatment instructions comprise a set of personalized instructions.

39. (Rejected) A method of Claim 34, further comprising the steps of collecting from a consumer one or more pieces of personal data, determining a consumer profile, and providing to the consumer a set of personalized instructions.

APPENDIX II



**CONSUMER
REPORTS
BOOKS**



How to Clean Practically Anything

THIRD EDITION/UPDATED

**FEATURING A STAIN REMOVAL
CHART FOR ALL FABRICS!**

**The Editors of Consumer Reports Books with
Monte Florman and Marjorie Florman**

is at its recommended full capacity, reducing the total number of loads you'll need to do on any given washday.

For the best ways to cope with a pile of dirty laundry, check the following reports on bleaches, detergents, boosters, softeners, and washing machines.

LAUNDRY

You can save energy and time and still end up with laundry loads that look clean and smell fresh if you sort clothes following the guidelines described below.

As you sort wash loads, remember to empty pockets and close zippers to prevent snagging. Next, check for heavy or troublesome stains which may become set by the washing process. Many stains won't respond well to a presoak or laundry booster alone, and require special treatment *before* washing. Check the Stain Removal Chart at the end of this book for detailed instructions on removing a variety of typical, and not so typical, stains.

In general, try to separate heavily soiled clothes from lightly soiled ones. Heavy soils have a tendency to become transferred, making whites and light colors appear dingy. Wash intense colors (very dark or very bright) separately. They may bleed, especially when washing for the first time, and permanently tint white or light-colored clothes washed in the same load. A good guide is the maker's care label.

Most wash loads do quite well in cold or warm water. Heavy soils may respond better to a hot-water wash, although hot water may have an adverse effect on a garment's permanent-press properties. Again, check the garment's care label.

Try to avoid sorting into loads that are too small: A washing machine is most efficient in its use of water (especially hot water) and electricity if it

BLEACHES

Liquid chlorine bleach is the old standby, having earned its place in the laundry room as well as in the bathroom and kitchen for whitening and removing stains and mildew.

But chlorine bleach also has its problems. The telltale signs of misuse or overuse of chlorine bleach are splotches of faded color or white spots, where undiluted bleach has splashed, and fabrics that have faded from vivid to dim.

Nonchlorine, "all-fabric" bleaches promise the benefits of chlorine bleach without the risk, but the real story unfolds in the laundry room.

Both chlorine and nonchlorine bleaches use an oxidizing agent (usually sodium hypochlorite or sodium perborate) that reacts with and lifts out a stain, with the help of a detergent. Liquid chlorine bleaches all have about the same amount of active ingredient, and there is little difference from one brand to another.

PERFORMANCE

Chlorine bleaches have always been better than nonchlorine, all-fabric bleaches at whitening clothes.

All-fabric bleaches, especially the powdered products, do whiten, but not nearly as well as chlorine bleaches. In fact, all-fabric liquid bleaches are hardly better at whitening than detergent alone. If you wash the laundry load successive times with an all-fabric bleach, the whitening process continues, but even several applications won't match the whitening power of a single use of chlorine bleach.

HARD-TO-REMOVE STAINS

Some stains, such as spaghetti sauce, red wine, and blood, seem to have an affinity for clothing and, once entrenched, leave with great reluctance.

Neither chlorine nor nonchlorine bleach can completely remove spaghetti sauce. In general, chlorine or nonchlorine bleach should be used with a good laundry detergent to succeed at removing greasy stains.

See the Stain Removal Chart for Fabrics on page 208 for additional information.

FADING

Bleach, especially chlorine bleach, can cause colors to fade.

Initially, bleach may have no noticeable effect on the brightness of colors. Chlorine bleaches may not seem harsher than an all-fabric product. After a few washings, however, the chlorine begins taking its toll. Slight fading becomes evident and then, after more washings, objectionable. But an all-fabric bleach will continue being kind to colors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Chlorine bleach, when used properly, is the most effective way to whiten fabrics, including some synthetics. It's ideal for the occasional whitening your wash may need, but knowing how to use chlorine bleach is essential. Improper and long-term use may take its toll on colors and fabric life. Using chlorine bleach may be tricky, but buying it is simple. The only real difference you are likely to find is price.

All-fabric powdered bleaches have the advantage of being safe with most fabrics and dyes, even over the long term. They're much more expensive to use than chlorine bleaches; however, they aren't as good at whitening.

A more reasonable and less costly approach might be the occasional and cautious use of chlorine bleach on chlorine-safe white fabrics to deliver the whitening you need. Use all-fabric bleach to brighten colors without fading and to whiten fabrics that are not safe for use with chlorine bleach.

When you use chlorine bleach, follow these guidelines:

- Bleach only when necessary.

- Before you bleach, read the garment's care label.
- Don't use chlorine bleach on wool, silk, mohair, or noncolorfast fabrics or dyes. If you're unsure about a garment's fabric content, experiment with a diluted solution of bleach on an inside seam. Any discoloration should appear in a minute or so.
- If your washer has a bleach dispenser, use it according to the manufacturer's directions. If there's no dispenser, follow the labeled directions on the bleach and on the laundry detergent.
- *Never* use chlorine bleach with ammonia or toilet cleaners. The combination can produce deadly fumes.

BOOSTERS

Many ordinary household stains are too stubborn for an ordinary detergent. Stain-fighting laundry boosters were created for times when the rag pile looks more inviting than the hamper. Sometimes boosters work; sometimes the clothes go to the rag pile after all.

Boosters are sold as powders, pump sprays, aerosols, liquids, and sticks. They may contain many of the same ingredients as detergents: surfactants, or cleaning agents; enzymes; water-softening "builders"; fluorescent dyes; and so forth. The powders include all-fabric bleach. Common boosters don't contain phosphorus.

Consumers Union testers checked the effectiveness of boosters on a variety of stains: chocolate syrup, makeup, grape juice, spaghetti sauce, blood, mud, grass, tea, black ink, and used motor oil. Each stain was smeared onto a separate set of three large white cotton-polyester swatches, and then a booster was used according to label instructions (but without presoaking).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF BOOSTERS

Here is a summary of the results.

Chocolate syrup. None of the boosters significantly improved upon the performance of the comparison product, a low-priced nonphosphorus

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laundry detergent powder. Many detergents, used alone, have no trouble removing chocolate stains.

Makeup. Stain removal was far from perfect even with the best boosters.

Grape juice. Several products eliminated most of the stain, but a bluish haze remained.

Spaghetti sauce. Only *Spray 'N Wash* stick could lift additional amounts of this stain, a tough one for all detergents.

Blood. Used alone, the comparison detergent had no effect on this protein-based stain. *Biz Bleach* was the only booster that removed any blood.

Mud. Only *Biz Bleach* improved on the fair job that the detergent had done.

Grass. The detergent couldn't touch this stain. When it was treated with *Spray 'N Wash* stick, however, barely a trace remained.

Tea. Several products were effective in removing this stain.

Used motor oil. A success story for boosters. Although none of the detergents could clean motor oil by themselves, the comparison detergent plus three boosters lifted some of the stain; and two aerosol boosters—*Spray 'N Wash* and *Shout*—wiped out most of it.

Ink. Ink from a black ballpoint pen proved too hard to remove for all the detergents, and it was beyond the capability of all the boosters.

Detergent alone. Applying part of a laundry dose of *Advanced Action Wisk* or *Tide* directly onto the stains before washing them was the most effective method of cleaning spaghetti sauce, mud, and grass.

CONVENIENCE

Lauderers with a single stained garment might like the *Spray 'N Wash* stick, which works the way a lipstick tube does. (*Bleach Stick* also comes in a tube, but you must push the booster up with a finger or pencil.) There are situations in which a stick would be decidedly inconvenient, however. Imagine rubbing a washload's worth of grass-stained knees, oil-stained overalls, and T-shirts dotted with last week's spaghetti dinner. Liquids, likewise, must be rubbed in.

Ratings of Laundry Boosters



each product improved the stain-fighting ability of a nonphosphorus powdered detergent (*Purex*). + means stain removal was better; ++ means improvement was negligible.

gent: liquids, sticks, aerosols, and pump sprays are applied directly to the stain before the wash is laundered.

Cost per use. The average paid to treat a 3-by-3½-inch stain, based on the cost of the whole product and on label recommendations for the amount to use

Enhanced stain removal. How well

Listed in order of estimated quality, based on enhancement of stain removal. Products with identical overall performance are bracketed and listed alphabetically. As published in a February 1991 report.

Product (type). Leading brands were tested in several forms. Powders are added to the washing machine along with detergent.

Product (type)	Cost per use	Enhanced stain removal
✓ <i>Spray 'N Wash</i> (stick)	26¢	+
<i>Biz Bleach</i> (powder)	2¢	+
<i>Spray 'N Wash</i> (aerosol)	5¢	+
<i>Easy Wash</i> (liquid)	12¢	+
<i>Shout</i> (liquid)	9¢	+
<i>Bleach Stick</i>	30¢	+
<i>Spray 'N Wash</i> (pump)	4¢	+
<i>Clorox 2 Bleach</i> (powder)	2¢	+
<i>Clorox</i> (liquid)	9¢	+
<i>Grease Relief</i> (liquid)	6¢	+
<i>Shout</i> (aerosol)	5¢	+

Key to Comments

- A-Squeeze bottle with convenient spout
- B-Ribbed cap effective for rubbing product on stain
- C-Trigger-pump bottle easy to use
- D-Dispensing tube convenient to use
- E-Contains enzymes
- F-Fails to warn about contact with eyes or skin
- G-Recommend pretesting to determine if fabric is colorfast
- H-Tested container easier to use than most by people with limited hand or arm function
- I-Tested container harder to use than others by people with limited hand or arm function
- J-No perfume

Features in Common

- All are phosphorus-free
- Except as noted, all: • Contain perfume • Warn about contact with eyes or skin.

there are superconcentrated products, whose container is as small as a lunchbox but can hold enough detergent for many loads.

The truth is that all detergents clean clothes. All are likely to be excellent at keeping loosened soil from settling back on clothes. As for stain removal and brightening, all detergents are also created equal.

STAIN REMOVAL

The following are highlights of detergents' stain-fighting abilities:

Chocolate syrup. No problem for most detergents. Even the worst detergent can do a good job, which means it removes about half the stain. An excellent detergent will make the stain disappear.

Makeup. Oil-based beige makeup contains iron oxide (rust), a very stubborn stain. Detergents with phosphorus are the most effective overall, but good nonphosphorus products can do quite well, too. The least effective detergents fade the stain slightly but fail to lift it.

Grape juice. This is a tough stain. Few detergents will remove all of it. The poorest ones will leave bluish blotches.

Spaghetti sauce. No detergent is likely to lift more than about half of the greasy stain left by tomato sauce with olive oil.

Blood. Products with enzymes are generally the most effective at removing blood.

Mud. Phosphorus detergents tend to clean mud a lot better than nonphosphorus products.

Grass. This stain is hard to remove. In Consumers Union tests, more than half of the nonphosphorus detergents had no effect.

Tea. Phosphorus tends to improve results.
Ink, motor oil. Dirty motor oil and black ink from a ballpoint pen are too tough for a laundry detergent. However, results improve remarkably if you use certain detergent boosters before laundering (see page 83).

BRIGHTENERS

Most laundry detergents contain optical brighteners that convert part of the invisible ultraviolet rays that come from the sun or fluorescent bulbs into visible light, thereby giving fabrics a little glow. (Because the effect does

not show up in incandescent light, it's likely to be more evident in an office or outdoors than it is at home.)

PRICES

You don't have to pay extra for performance. Indeed, there is little correlation between price and cleaning ability. You will pay more for the convenience of liquids or premeasured packets. The addition of bleach will add a few pennies per wash. Detergents containing fabric softener don't cost any more than the detergent products alone. They also don't work very well, either as detergents or as softeners.

You can save the most money by forgetting brand loyalty: Clip coupons and stock up on whatever satisfactory product is on sale.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consumers have become so used to hearing manufacturers tout "new and improved" products, it's easy to forget how much better the state of laundering is today than it was in the soap age. On a load of laundry grayed with everyday dirt, the range of performance with today's products would be clean to cleanest, not dirty to clean. Of course, some detergents do work better than others. But unless your clothes are very soiled, these differences may not matter all that much.

When faced with badly soiled laundry, opt for a high-quality detergent. If you live in an area that permits the sale of phosphorus detergents, you have your pick of phosphorus or nonphosphorus products. Obviously, where phosphorus is banned you must choose a nonphosphorus detergent. Some liquids can clean nearly as well as the leading powders.

You'd do well to stay away from detergent-fabric softener combinations, which are only moderately successful at either task. The optimal softener is a liquid you add during the rinse cycle (see "Fabric Softeners," page 109).

If you suffer from allergies or sensitive skin, consider a detergent without enzymes or perfumes, the most likely sources of irritation.

For all detergents, an ideal package is light in weight, easy to open, and easy to handle once it's opened.

solves during the wash; the fibers of the bag hold the softener. When the washing machine has done its work, you transfer the empty bag to the dryer along with the laundry.

EFFECTIVENESS

Add combination detergent-softeners to the laundry load at the start of the wash cycle, add rinse liquids at the beginning of the final rinse (after a wash with a no-extras detergent), and toss the dryer sheets into the dryer with the wet laundry. (As recommended, place the sheets on top of the laundry, not under it. This is supposed to prevent spotting.)

For cleaning, soft water is better than hard; for softening, the reverse is true.

The most effective softeners are rinse liquids. But the least effective rinse liquids are much worse than the best.

All dryer sheets soften to roughly the same degree; they are about as good as a middle-of-the-road rinse liquid.

Detergent-softeners show that there's still a price to be paid for convenience. In tests conducted by Consumers Union, none was better than mediocre at softening. (It was much the same story in laundering tests—most of the combination products proved no match for other detergents.) The worst products left towels feeling as if a softener hadn't been used—oily, slimy, or rough in the testers' words.

STATIC CLING

Many people use a fabric softener to cut static cling caused by the dryer's tumbling. Untreated fabric can accumulate a 12,000-volt static charge. Because of its tiny amperage, the jolt isn't dangerous; nevertheless, it's enough to make the hair on your arms stand up.

The friction-reducing chemicals in softeners prevent a static charge from accumulating. Synthetic materials are more prone to static than is cotton.

Brightening. The waxy coating left by fabric softeners may eventually make clothes look dingy. Whites can turn ashen or jaundiced; colors can lose their punch. To counteract this tendency, some fabric softeners, and most detergents, have optical brighteners that give fabrics a slight glow.

With a few exceptions, only the detergent-softeners brighten effectively. The lion's share of the brightening, no doubt, is done by the detergent.

Our recommendation: If whiter whites and brighter brights are important to you, use a detergent with good brightening ability before you use a softener.

Absorbency. In the past, the waxy coating in softeners made towels less thirsty. Nowadays, any softener should leave clothes nearly as absorbent as if they hadn't been treated; apparently, manufacturers have licked the absorbency problem.

Fragrance. Makers of laundry products include fragrances partly because someone at the company thinks consumers like them and partly to hide the smell of other chemical ingredients. You may find the aroma of some dryer sheets reminiscent of cheap perfume. The liquids have fragrances, too, but they're less powerful.

No matter how potent it seems in the package, the fragrance is muted considerably by the time the wash is done. If you like a fabric softener for its other qualities but dislike the smell, let your laundry air out for a while before you put it away.

Some people can't tolerate *any* fragrance, whether for aesthetic or allergic reasons. Several fabric softeners and detergents that promote their lack of additives—and typically sport names that end in "free"—are available.

PRICING

The better rinse liquids cost between 11 and 16 cents per use. The price of a dryer sheet ranges from 4 to 8 cents. The most effective detergent-softener costs between 13 and 23 cents per use. If you consider that you also get your laundry cleaned for that price, combination products look like the best deal, but they're not; they neither clean nor soften as well as single-purpose products.

You can save money by buying whatever is on sale or using cents-off coupons. You might also try using a little less than the recommended amount of a softener—cutting a dryer sheet in half, for example.

If you look at unit-pricing labels on your supermarket shelves, you may not get the whole story. Some stores list price per quart or per pound,

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